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BAPTIST RECORD

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EDITORIAL

On First, Fourth & Fifth Pages

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE correspondents of Bro. W. H. Allen will make a note of the fact that he has changed his residence from Hartman to Brookhaven, and act in accordance therewith.

BELOVED, your community is no exception as to the gripe. It looks as if every other person you meet in Meridian is either just going into it, or recovering from it; and the rest of them are at home in bed with it.

WE were glad to see the pleasant face of Bro. J. D. Stone in our office the other day. He is one of our nearest neighbors—six miles out at Eastville—but far too seldom a caller. He always brings sunshine, and almost as often good "copy" or "cash," either or all of which is popular currency in the editor's sanctum. He left his que for the Preachers' Institute, and although he is one of our most effective preachers, will, we doubt not, get a large benefit from its sessions.

If you want to hear the meaning of the Word of God made so plain that the most unlearned, as well as the school man, can understand it, or if you would learn new and more effectual methods of studying the same, then fail not to put in an appearance at the Preachers' Institute in this city on the 26th inst., and see it through its ten days session. The expense, after railroad fare, will be only three dollars. The Baptists of Meridian will be glad to entertain you free. Send your name to Rev. J. R. Farish for entertainment and come on.

WE observe in the *Alabama Baptist* that our brother, S. O. Y. Ray, so long and successfully one of our earnest workers in East Mississippi has left the general work in Alabama and gone into the pastorate. His home is at Midway, where he preaches two Sundays, giving one each to the neighboring

He regards it a good field and is happy in it. We hope our Baptist friends will be glad to hear this from Bro. Ray, for we all know and have a lively interest in him and his, and will

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT; THE SPIRIT IN JEWISH SENSE.

The above expression is one of constant use in our modern, current, religious literature. It is not an exact reproduction of the scriptural language which it is intended to represent. The word "in" is not found in the passages where the Spirit baptism is mentioned. It is *in*, or with the Holy Spirit. This grammatical difference is an important one, when the doctrinal aspect is to be considered. The expression was formulated by John the Baptist. It is stamped with the image and superscription of his mind and character. It is a growth found in his climate of thought. It is an indigenous growth within the realm of his activity and life. Wherever it is used by others in the New Testament as a medium of exchange of truth, it is credited to him, or connected with him in some way, and its value placed at the estimate which he made of it when he gave it being and currency. This is very important to remember in any discussion of the subject; for we are to determine what it meant when used by him.

(1) John's conception of the Holy Spirit was Jewish and not Christian. In his time the distinctive personality of the Holy Spirit had not yet been revealed.

Such revelation was not made in its explicit fullness until after the advent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The doctrine of the Trinity was a New Testament development. The fact of it existed, but not the revelation of it. This would seem to be implied in the very expression of John the Baptist: "He that cometh after me shall baptize you in (with) the Holy Spirit and fire." In this act John saw Christ as the active agent, and the Holy Spirit as the element in which the act was performed. The Spirit certainly is not thought of, or presented, as active in the transaction which John designated by the expression, "Baptize in the Spirit." In the interpretation of the language we certainly should not put more into it than John did, if we are willing for it to mean what John intended it to mean. We think it can be shown that in the Jewish, or Old Testament conception, the personality of the Holy Spirit is only figurative; but in the Christian use of the term, the impersonal sense is figurative. When John spoke of the Holy Spirit as the element in which the Christ was to baptize, he did not use the article "the" before the Holy Spirit; not "the Holy Spirit," but "Holy Spirit." The absence of the article "the" would show that John was thinking of the Holy Spirit as "an element, a pervading presence, like the air, in the ocean of which," the disciples "were to be submerged."

He who reads this statement will easily discover that in every instance where John's expression, "baptize in the Spirit," is used, the article "the" before Spirit, is omitted. This further confirms the above view, that

in every instance as an impersonal, pervasive element, or influence.

(2) John's idea manifestly was, that as he was baptizing in the element of water, so Christ would baptize in the element of Holy Spirit. Once more, just as the water could cleanse really only the body, it was regarded

by him as the sign of the inward cleansing which Christ would do in the element of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual work which was to be wrought by Christ upon the inner man was what John saw figuratively represented by his baptism. The doctrinal significance of baptism as unfolded by Paul subsequently, doubtless never dawned upon the mind of John the Baptist.

This reference to the Holy Spirit as an impersonal element or influence, is confirmed furthermore in the use of the preposition "en," rendered in the Old Version by the word "with." The true rendering is "in;" "in Spirit," and not "with." This the American Committee of the Revisers of the New Testament felt, and so they recommended that "in" be substituted for "with" in the text, and that "with" be placed in the margin. The English Committee declined the suggestion, but put "in" in the margin and let "with" stand in the text. The American Committee had only two Baptists on it. The recommendation that "in" be substituted for "with," was the work of two Baptists. The recent critical commentators, render the preposition "en" by the English word "in." The scholarship of the world has come to that view. They agree with Bishop Lightfoot that the "instrumental sense of 'en'" is indefensible. So that "in," and not "with," or "by," is the force which must be given to the Greek preposition "en" in the expression, "baptize in Holy Spirit." John the Baptist saw in his prophetic perspective only the activity of Christ in the salvation of the soul from sin. John knew enough to perform the duties assigned him in the unfolding process of the economy of redemption. He was the herald of the Coming One. He knew of the coming of the One preferred before him. He knew that the purpose of Christ's mission was to purify a people unto the Lord. But the details as to the accomplishment of this, he did not know, so far as can be gathered from the New Testament. The coming of the Spirit, and his activity in the application of Christ's work, John did not know, so far as we can learn from his teaching and work. We are very prone to outrun the simple principle of the gradual revelation of truth, and give passages meanings which they did not express by those who used them, and by those who heard them.

We have admitted Bro. Beasley's "Friendly Reply" to Bro. Link at the beginning of this column, because we made a mistake in his method, and that in our opinion he would help what he opposed, more than he would hinder it.

Seeing all of this, as we did, we have every reason to believe

ABOUT THAT DISCUSSION.

We have not been unobservant of, nor totally indifferent to, the kind reflections and loving insinuations of the *Texas Baptist Standard* toward THE RECORD in connection with what it calls "Martinism;" but scarcely thought it necessary to treat it seriously. But now that *The Layman* has taken it up, and out of pure and loving disinterestedness, is passing it around, it has been suggested that we might add somewhat to the interest of the matter by viewing it a mite more substantially, if not more seriously.

We think we pretty well understand the motive of *The Standard* in the matter, for that paper has almost overwhelmed us with its loving attentions ever since we so heartily (?) espoused its cause and followed its leadership when its beloved editor went into politics. But *The Layman*'s motive is, of course, even higher and more distinguished. The policy of THE RECORD and *Layman* used to be identical on the Martin matter, as it was once developed in a conversation with the former editor, Bro. Bailey, and that was that it was best to keep it all out of the papers, unless there could be full and safe discussion of it, that all the people might see and know just what it was. But that paper, along with *The Standard*, has evidently evolved along some lines of religious journalism somewhat more rapidly than THE RECORD. Nevertheless, we hope to keep up at least with the tail end of the procession led by our two loving and obliging contemporaries, for it would be a sad privation not occasionally to hear a blast from their trumpets.

But to the matter in hand. *The Standard* says our plan for the discussion is the same as that by which M. T. Martin spread his doctrines over Texas, etc. To this statement we enter a positive denial. The two methods are no more alike than a well-ordered boxing match of trained athletes, and a free and promiscuous hoodlum Saturday night fight. Our plan proposed the clear and distinct statement by Martin, in regular order, of such points of views in his system as are called in question, and then a like orderly criticism and refutation of them by a suitable respondent, with a brief rejoinder, without new matter. But as we remember—and we read it all—the Link and Martin discussion in *The Texas Baptist Herald* was little more than a "wrangle"—a disputation about words on but one topic only that of "assurance," which went on through many weary weeks, first one and then the other, with several others on both sides chipping in until many people were sick of it for its very unprofitableness. We remember telling

like fiasco for Mississippi Baptists in THE RECORD. The difference between the two methods is clearly seen, and the justness and safety of ours, freely admitted by every man who has spoken to us, or written to us about it. The fact is, so far as we know, there are only three parties in or about the kingdom, who object to our plan. One is *The Standard* man, who, as usual, is "barking up the wrong tree"; another is *The Layman*, who is not to be outdone by the loving *Standard*, and the other is Rev. M. T. Martin himself, who, every one would think from *The Standard* talk, would be particularly pleased with the situation. It seems to us that this is a pretty good case of the "meeting of extremes."

In conclusion, we want to say, that we have not thought it proper to make any special pronouncement against "Martinism" since the time the Mississippi Association secured our consent to publish the discussion in THE RECORD, for the reason that we did not think it the proper thing to do, seeing that it might prejudice the case and prevent a fair discussion and understanding of it, before the discussion came off. We repeat here what we have said to those who have written us high-pressure letters on that particular point, that it would be time enough for that when the discussion has failed to materialize; if, indeed, it should. With this opinion, Bro. Sibley, the chairman of the Associational Committee on the discussion, fully agreed, and we have not seen any reason for a change of opinion or policy since. And, finally, it is well known by all who have read, or heard us, as we have several times written and spoken, that we do not accept or entertain what is known as "Martinism," and it need not be especially emphasized here and now.

One word more. When the pressure for a discussion of the matter in hand was first made on us, we wrote to Dr. J. B. Gambrill, our former Senior associate, for whose judgment in such things we always have had the greatest respect, and asked for his opinion and advice. He promptly replied that if he were with THE RECORD as heretofore, he would discuss the matter with Martin. That opinion has had great weight with us, and ought to with all who know the author of it.

THE preacher who declines to attend a preachers' institute or school, for the study of the scriptures, because it is to be led or taught by a man, must necessarily, in order to be consistent, utterly refuse to look inside of a commentary on the Bible for light, consult a Bible dictionary, or even read a printed sermon, etc. Any other man preach except himself. The Christian philosophy of such a man is too exalted for us; we cannot attain unto

